

City of Forman, North Dakota
Regular City Council Meeting
May 10, 2022

The regular City Council meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Kevin Bopp. Present were council members Luke Anderson, Al Colemer, and Neil Weaving. John Stenvold was absent. Also attending were Trish Pearson, Sara Dux, Lyle Bopp, Donavon Hajek, Russell Boutain, Jackie Engquist and Travis Paeper.

A motion was made by Al Colemer, seconded by Neil Weaving to approve the agenda for the regular council meeting. Motion carried.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Sheriff Travis Paeper reviewed the policing hours for the month of April. He also mentioned that he is working with John Stenvold and the commissioners to get the cost-of-living adjustment increase approved.

Jacquie Engquist had submitted a building permit for taking out some steps and pouring a concrete slab to try to eliminate water coming into her basement. She also asked the council about replacing her sidewalk. It is on the priority list but we are waiting on a quote from Shay Walden. A motion was made by Al Colemer, seconded by Luke Anderson to approve the building permit for Jacquie Engquist to remove the planter steps and pour a concrete slab. Motion carried.

Russell Boutain asked that the council revisit the issue with the alley behind his business. The current driveway that is being utilized as an alley is on his property. The actual alley is to the west of his drive area. There are a couple of trees that are in the alley as is Mark Bopp's shed. Russell said he is willing to use his equipment to open the alley, take out the trees and work with Mark to move his shed if the city will approve. The city would need to bring in about 10 loads of gravel. Boutain also passed around diagrams for a building addition he wants to add to the rear of his building, but he needs the alley issue dealt with first. The council asked him to work with Anthony to locate the pins for the alley. They are willing to work with Russell to get this worked out. Once the pins are located, Russell will need to submit the building permit application for the addition. Mayor Bopp said it does not have to wait until the next meeting.

A motion was made by Al Colemer, seconded by Neil Weaving to approve minutes from the April 12, 2022 regular city council meeting. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Neil Weaving, seconded by Luke Anderson to approve the city auditor's report including the April financial statements, delinquency report and payment of the bills. Motion carried.

Donavon Hajek presented the City Superintendent's report. There were no comments on last month's activities. Luke Anderson asked where we are sitting with water – both drinking water and sewers. Donavon updated the council on several issues. They shut the water plant down for a while to save on water going into the sewer system. There is a problem with a control in the pump house causing water not to be pumped up to the tower. Water pressure was very low around 4:00 am until Anthony started the pump manually. They tried to work with Automatic Systems to get it working to no avail. It will require an onsite trip. We are still waiting for the parts from Wigen. They were supposed to be shipped yesterday. If parts arrive before Automatic Systems comes out, they can assist with the installation. The lift stations are keeping up for now. The main lift station has a hole in the base that needs repair. We are waiting for a quote from North Dakota Sewage Pump. We received a quote from Automatic Systems to upgrade our hardware and software at the water plant.

Sheriff Paeper had asked that the city please act on the stop signs along the frontage road but particularly by Kwik Stop. We have discussed it for over a year and have not done anything. Donavon will work with Travis to get something in place before the next meeting. Luke discussed locations to put in one or two handicap parking spaces at the drug store. He felt one space on Main Street was sufficient given the volume, but Al Colemer pointed out that a space on Antelope would be considered van accessible. They considered only the Antelope side, but Main Street is better for handicapped persons who still drive. They decided to go with two spaces. Donavon will check to see if we have any blue paint at the shop. Luke will ask the drug store if we can mount signs on their building.

Al Colemer said that the dead-end sign on his street can be removed as it is not in good condition and not serving any purpose. Kevin asked that the speed limit sign on Main Street be removed for now until we can find a better and more stable location for it.

The Bobcat arrived last Friday and the old one picked up. The old grapple was sold to Mark Bopp. We should be receiving a check for that.

We will need some help with summer mowing until we can get a maintenance worker hired.

The council discussed replacement of some sections of sidewalk. Attorney Lyle Bopp researched the city ordinances. As it stands, the owner is responsible for the care, maintenance and repair or replacement of the sidewalk adjacent to their property. The process is for the city to notify the property owner of the need and give them the opportunity to do the work. If they do not, the city can do the work and charge it against their taxes. Historically, the city has cost shared sidewalk work with property owners, but it is not in our ordinances or policies. We are under no obligation to do so. Luke said we do not want to change the ordinance but the city can always choose to repair or replace sections of sidewalk if it is within our budget. Trish Pearson said that we put \$15,000 in our sidewalk budget last year to address several areas. Luke Anderson said the city should take care of the priority list to the extent of our budget this year and take it one year at a time. Lyle said to check on the availability of infrastructure funds that might be available for sidewalks. Talk with the City of Milnor or Interstate Engineering.

Any work on updating ordinances is on hold until the North Dakota League of Cities releases their updated sample ordinances.

Sara Dux reviewed her activities for the month. The new city signs will be ready to install on May 19. Sara has removed the old letters from two of the three signs. Anthony and Donavon will stain the wood on the signs when they get a break in the weather and water issues. Sara asked the council to look at solar lights to light up the signs. The council asked Russell Boutain if he could get lights. Lighting will need to be powerful enough to illuminate the large signs and have enough battery power to last through a night. Sara said that Car Fest is June 11th. She would still like to have a meeting with all parties involved to bring together the details. Kevin will arrange that meeting. The new Scoop is up and running and we have over 300 subscribers. The bank had about 900 on their list. We will ask them to send out another email to remind people to contact Sara to be on the mailing list.

We have a possibility to do some extra security upgrades with a homeland security grant. We might be able to include some of the planned work at the water plant. Trish Pearson will read the grant guidance and submit an application if it will work for our projects.

Sargent County Emergency Management is updating their Integrated Preparedness Plan. They have a survey that needs to be completed this week. Kevin will work with Wendy to complete the survey.

The council discussed the quote received by Automatic Systems to upgrade the computer and software at the water plant. There have been no updates since it was put in place in 2015. Neil Weaving sent an email to our contact asking for a breakdown of each of the items listed in the quote. He also wants to make sure the computer has Windows 11 as Windows 10 will be retired in three years. He has not heard back from them. This is work that needs to be done to keep the water plant running properly and to provide the best security. We will also need Computer Express to install a firewall and VPN. Luke Anderson said this project would be a good use of some of the ARPA funds that we received. A motion was made by Luke Anderson, seconded by Al Colemer to approve the contract with Automatic Systems to upgrade the hardware and software including the optional emergency alarm programming to be paid for with ARPA funding. Roll call vote: Anderson – aye, Colemer – aye, Stenvold – absent, Weaving – aye. Motion carried.

The council took up business of the Forman Housing Authority. Zirnhelt's asked if their carpeting could be replaced as it is the original. The front door on unit 101 has been installed and looks good. There is one strip of trim that needs to be painted. All of the doors need to be replaced but the back doors are the worst. Russ will get prices on the doors and schedule the installer. The roof will wait for now. The council talked about listing the units and trying to get them sold. All agreed it was a good time to list them. A motion was made by Al Colemer, seconded by Neil Weaving to approve the city loaning the funds necessary to replace the eight back doors and replace the carpeting in unit 107 and to list the units for sale. Roll call vote: Colemer – aye, Stenvold – absent, Anderson – aye, Weaving – aye.

Russell Boutain asked the city if he could have permission to remove the two trees that are in the alley. He will do the work himself with no cost to the city. The council agreed.

Donavon Hajek mentioned that the water plant is leaking when it rains where the walls meet the floor and at the step down at the roof. He will look into what we need to seal the gaps.

City Hall and Shop are closed Monday, May 30 for Memorial Day.

Our next regular council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Kevin Bopp, Mayor

Trish Pearson, City Auditor